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Letter dated 19 August 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan held the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January 2014. I have the honour to transmit herewith an assessment of the work of the Council during the presidency of Jordan (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dina **Kawar**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 19 August 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Jordan (January 2014)

Introduction

Under the presidency of Jordan in January 2014, the Security Council held a total of 18 meetings. The Council also adopted four resolutions and issued nine statements to the press and two presidential statements during January.

Africa

Central African Republic

On 6 January, the Security Council held consultations to discuss the situation in the Central African Republic. The Council received briefings from the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, and the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Tete António. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Integration, Francophonie and Central Africans Abroad of the Central African Republic, Léonie Banga-Bothy, also participated in the meeting.

The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs indicated that the situation in the Central African Republic has deteriorated at an alarming rate. All Central Africans have been affected by the crisis. Nearly half of the population needs humanitarian assistance. Persistent violence has forced one fifth of the population to flee their homes. That number has more than doubled since 5 December 2013. He mentioned that the attacks by the anti-Balaka against Bangui triggered a period of heavy unrest in the capital and the interior of the country. He pointed out that the quick deployment by the African Union and France, respectively, of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) and Operation Sangaris prevented the situation from degenerating into higher levels of conflict and atrocities.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs mentioned that the 5 December attack was a fatal blow to the efforts carried out until then. She called for the strengthening of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General playing an extremely important role in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; in human rights and peacebuilding; and in the forthcoming organization of the elections in the near future.

Mr. António indicated that this violence is all the more destabilizing and difficult to contain because it has assumed a sectarian and religious character. He pointed out that the reinforcement of ground personnel of MISCA helped to contain the tide of violence, but the Mission was operating under difficult conditions and facing several challenges. He also reiterated the gratitude of the African Union to the international partners that have been supporting MISCA, but additional logistical and financial support was still required so that the Mission could create

the minimal conditions for the deployment of a United Nations operation in due course.

Council members expressed concerns over the deterioration of the humanitarian and security situation, with atrocities on a large scale, and underlined that the quick deployment by the African Union and France, respectively, of MISCA and Operation Sangaris had prevented the situation from degenerating into higher levels of conflict. They stressed that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all armed groups should constitute one of the top priorities. They also stated that stabilization could be achieved only through the promotion of national reconciliation through the fight against impunity and interreligious dialogue.

On 22 January 2014, the Security Council met and heard briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Bangura, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Kyung-wha Kang.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict briefed the Security Council on the visit to the Central African Republic from 17 to 21 December 2013, in particular on the situation of children and armed conflict. She pointed out that the goal of the mission, in line with the "Rights up front" framework, was to advocate for action and responses from the transitional authorities and obtain their commitment to stopping the violence. She stressed the importance of ensuring better coordination among all actors on the ground, including through civil-military liaisons, and strongly welcomed the imminent establishment of a commission of inquiry, as well as the Council's intention to adopt targeted measures against perpetrators of violations against children.

The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide emphasized that there should be concerted efforts to promote and support a national peace and reconciliation process. There was also an urgent need to promote dialogue between Christians and Muslims to mitigate the existing ethnic and religious divisions in the country. Among the initiatives, he said that his Office is working to support the efforts of the President of the Commission on Human Rights of the National Transitional Council and the National Coordinator of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to organize peace forums in the country that will bring together community and religious leaders from seven provinces. He pointed out the difficulty of promoting reconciliation and restoring peace in the country without addressing the current culture of impunity.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict noted the horrendous trends of sexual violence and warned that, if parties were not made to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, the consequences would be grave. She said that immediate steps should also be taken to improve the protection of civilians and called for an increased focus on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. She commended the Council for establishing sanctions mechanisms and a commission of inquiry on human rights violations in the Central African Republic and called for their expedited implementation.

The Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator stressed the importance of addressing the root causes of the conflict and the need to look beyond today and take immediate action to restore livelihoods and preserve community support structures. She added that there is a need to support civil society, religious leaders and local communities as they strive to heal the wounds of violent conflict, rebuild social cohesion, stabilize communities and reduce sectarian violence.

In closed consultations, Council members called on the scaling up of the response with robust actions through political commitment and mobilization of the international community to end the crisis. Several members welcomed the establishment of a commission of inquiry, as well as the intention of the Council to adopt targeted measures against perpetrators of violations against children. They pointed out that the rapid strengthening of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) and the deployment of the MISCA civilian component will be key to ensuring adequate human rights monitoring and protection expertise.

On 28 January 2014, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2134 (2014), which extended the mandate of BINUCA for a year. The resolution requested stepping up the transition process with elections to be held by the end of 2014, if possible. The resolution sets other tasks for the Mission, which includes cooperation with the sanctions committee and its Panel of Experts.

Sudan and South Sudan

On 9 January 2014, the Security Council met in closed consultations to hear a briefing on the situation in the Sudan and South Sudan by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, and, by videoteleconference, by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios, as well as by the United Nations Special Representative in Juba and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Hilde Johnson. The briefers discussed the regional dimension of the conflict and UNMISS efforts in protecting civilians, facilitating humanitarian assistance and monitoring and reporting on human rights violations. They were also updated on the results of the 6 January 2014 talks between President Salva Kiir of South Sudan and President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan in Juba and the status of negotiations in Addis Ababa between representatives loyal to the Government of South Sudan and those aligned with former Vice-President Riek Machar.

During the meeting, Council members expressed their concern about the horrendous conditions, exacerbated by the threat of civil war and massive human rights violations, which continued to have a direct effect on the deterioration of the humanitarian situation. They reiterated their strong support for the mediation efforts led by the Intergovernmental Authority for Development, and called on all parties to cease the violence, protect civilians, provide humanitarian access and secure economic infrastructure as they sought a peaceful settlement to the crisis in South Sudan.

Following that meeting, the President of the Security Council delivered a statement to the press on 10 January 2014.

On 23 January 2014, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Security Council on activities of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation (UNAMID) in Darfur and on the security and humanitarian situation in the region. He noted the limited progress regarding the peace process and the continued increase in attacks by armed assailants on UNAMID and humanitarian workers, which is a case of serious concern. He also expressed deep concern at the increasing number of peacekeepers killed in Darfur in 2013, and called on the Government of the Sudan to investigate those crimes. He stated that the strategic review that was conducted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the African Union, UNAMID and the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes looked at ways to improve the impact of UNAMID on the ground. He strongly urged the Government to observe the terms of the status-of-forces agreement and to ensure that Mission personnel have full and unhindered freedom of movement for the substantive implementation of the mandate throughout Darfur.

The Deputy Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations, Hassan Hassan, also participated in the meeting. He highlighted the initiatives that were undertaken by the Government of the Sudan, which led to reconciliation agreements between the various tribes. He also stated that delays in a number of areas of work also resulted partially from the fact that a number of groups that had joined the peace process have been targeted, thus causing additional delay in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. Despite these developments, he expressed the Government commitment to continuing the peace process.

In closed consultations, the Security Council members received a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović, and by videoteleconference from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS on the situation in South Sudan. The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights briefed the Council on his trip to South Sudan from 14 to 17 January, to assess the human rights situation in the country after visiting Juba, Bor and Bentiu. He also emphasized the importance of holding those responsible for human rights violations to account. Mrs. Johnson briefed the members on UNMISS operations and the situation on the ground.

The members of the Council condemned all actions by Government and opposition forces seeking to obstruct or impede UNMISS and threaten its personnel. They also underlined the contributions that the international community and UNMISS will make in investigating human rights violations and other abuses committed during the conflict, and welcomed the decision of the African Union Peace and Security Council to put in place a commission to investigate the human rights violations and abuses committed during the conflict in South Sudan.

Following this meeting, the President of the Security Council delivered a statement to the press on 23 January 2014.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 13 January, the Security Council held a meeting to discuss the most recent report of the Secretary-General regarding the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) (S/2013/757). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of

MONUSCO, Martin Kobler, and the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, Mary Robinson, briefed the Council. The Special Representative indicated that MONUSCO has re-oriented and streamlined its priorities along three main axes: security and protection; stabilization of conflict-affected areas; and implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. He welcomed President Kabila's address to the nation, in which he reiterated that security sector reform must remain the "priority of priorities". With respect to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Special Representative mentioned that ADF continued to spread terror in the north, with massive human rights violations. He added that he was encouraged by the fact that the amnesty law, submitted to Parliament as promised in Nairobi, will exempt the perpetrators of gross human rights violations from amnesty. He also mentioned the efforts in the fight against the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and pointed out that Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) has become more effective and more operational, which has had a decisive impact on the military success against Mouvement du mars 23 (M23). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MONUSCO stressed the importance of implementing the Nairobi declarations and called upon all Member States to support the implementation of the stabilization strategy by funding stabilization programmes. He indicated that peace can be durable only if root causes of conflict are addressed through regional cooperation and economic governance. The Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region recalled the necessity to make further progress in the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation, and called for the swift implementation of an effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme to disarm and reintegrate the former combatants of M23.

Council members sought further information on the third plan for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. They questioned how it would be different from previous plans, how to speed up this issue and what else could be done to put an end to the recruitment of children. Furthermore, they requested additional information regarding the process of the fight against armed groups and the financial situation of the Congolese army, and enquired about how the Council could provide assistance.

Mali

On 16 January 2014, the Security Council held consultations to consider the situation in Mali. The Special Representative to Mali and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), Bert Koenders, briefed the Council and provided an overview of the political and security situation in Mali. He noted the general progress on the humanitarian front and the return to constitutional order, but raised concerns that these gains could be undermined if a full complement of United Nations peacekeepers is not deployed soon, so as to provide an environment conducive to peace talks and reconciliation between the Government and the parties, including the Tuareg in the north of the country. He also underlined the fragility of the security situation in the north, condemned the increased extremist attacks and called on the Malian authorities to strengthen the gains and address the root causes of the crisis in Mali.

The Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations, Sékou Kassé, and the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations and Chair

of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Youssoufou Bamba, also participated in the meeting.

The Permanent Representative of Mali highlighted the progress made on the political and security fronts and in the areas of restoring State authority, protecting human rights, developing humanitarian activities, carrying out the mandate of MINUSMA and international coordination. He asked the Security Council to call on Member States, perhaps through a presidential statement, to support the strengthening of MINUSMA with appropriate means and to encourage them to uphold their commitments made in Brussels in May 2013.

The Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations and Chair of ECOWAS indicated that since the election of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and following the recent well-organized elections, normal constitutional order has been re-established in Mali fully and irreversibly. However, he stressed that those gains must be strengthened and consolidated by rapid progress.

Council members noted the improvement in the overall situation in Mali, but expressed their concern about the possibility of a deterioration of the relatively stable security situation, especially that armed groups were being reorganized in northern areas. Several members welcomed the deployment of additional troops in the north and called for enhancing MINUSMA capacity to enable it to carry out its mandate. A number of members stressed the importance of holding those who had been responsible for violations of human rights accountable. While other members emphasized the importance of tracing the flow of small arms and called for effective implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. They looked forward to the formation of a new Government and to the adoption of a comprehensive programme aimed at reaching national reconciliation in Mali.

On 23 January, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement on Mali.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 27 January 2014, the Security Council received a briefing from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Côte d'Ivoire and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Aïchatou Mindaoudou, by videoteleconference from Abidjan regarding the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. The Special Representative highlighted progress achieved on political reconciliation and noted the positive evolutions in the dialogue between the different sides in the context of the permanent framework for dialogue. She also mentioned the steps that had been taken to address the root causes of the Ivorian crisis, including by passing legislation on land tenure issues and nationality. However, she cautioned that the situation remained fragile, with an increase in inter-communitarian and ethnic violence. She stressed the importance of putting in place the conditions for an environment conducive to peaceful elections mainly in the areas of electoral reforms, disarmament and security sector reform. The Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations also participated in the meeting. With respect to the security situation, he noted that concerns remain with regard to the border with Liberia, given the ongoing presence of mercenaries and the illegal trafficking of weapons. Nonetheless, the overall situation has improved significantly following the strengthening of the quadripartite cooperation among the security services of Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Liberia. He also highlighted the positive developments, fully aligned with the United Nations

approach, and supported the planned drawdown and reconfiguration of the UNOCI military and police presence between now and 2015, as mentioned in the report.

During closed consultations, Council members encouraged all Ivorian political actors to work in support of an inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation. Several members pointed out to some violations of human rights, and emphasized the importance of holding the violators accountable. Others also stressed the importance of investigating the deaths of seven United Nations peacekeepers, while several other members stressed the need for necessary reforms before the presidential elections in 2015 and the necessity to work to achieve the timelines set out in resolution 2112.

Burundi

On 28 January 2014, the Security Council held a meeting to consider the situation in Burundi and the terms of the renewal of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB). The Security Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of BNUB, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, who discussed the process towards holding transparent, free and peaceful elections in 2015. In this context, he expressed his optimism about Burundi's recent progress despite some challenges, such as the absence of a consensual process for the revision of the Constitution and political violence. He underlined that the Secretary-General had recommended that the mandate of BNUB be renewed. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Burundi, Laurent Kavakure, also participated in the meeting and stressed that the dialogue among political stakeholders was a clear sign of ongoing efforts to ensure the success of the elections. He requested the Council to adopt a resolution terminating BNUB, and requested the Secretary-General to determine the practical arrangements for its closure and the gradual transfer of its responsibilities to the United Nations country team. The Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Paul Seger, underlined the need to retain the spirit of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement and the Geneva Partners Conference of October 2012. During closed consultations, Council members continued discussions regarding the presence of BNUB while taking into account the overall situation. Some members expressed their concern over practices restricting freedom of expression and underlined the importance of engaging with the Government of Burundi to ensure inclusive participation in the elections. Some members expressed the need for a continued United Nations presence in Burundi to support the political process. Several members underscored the importance of reaching an agreement with the Government of Burundi to determine the time frame and proper planning for the transfer of tasks from the Office to the country team.

A number of members also called attention to the importance of focusing on the achievement of constitutional reforms, the administration of justice and speeding up the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission before the elections.

Middle East

On Monday, 20 January 2014, the Security Council held an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Secretary-General briefed on the efforts made to reaching a framework on all core

issues to address Israeli and Palestinian aspirations in a fair and balanced manner and to allow for continued negotiations towards a final status agreement. He stressed that a framework of understanding must be consistent with the principles on all core issues outlined in Security Council resolutions, the Madrid principles, the road map and the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative. He added that the Israeli and Palestinian leaders will be required to make bold decisions and compromises for peace. He was alarmed by recurrent violence and incitement on all sides and by the continued settlement activity, which he described is illegal under international law. He added that both parties must act responsibly and with restraint.

Members commended the Palestinian and Israeli sides for resuming peace negotiations and expressed their support for the efforts of the United States in this regard. They reiterated their support for the two-State solution and called on both parties to refrain from actions that will undermine the atmosphere required for the ongoing negotiations, particularly the continued settlement activity that many members considered illegal. Many members also condemned the rocket attacks on Israel from Gaza. Moreover, members addressed the Syrian crisis, as they welcomed the second Geneva conference to be held that week. They also expressed their serious concern regarding the deepening humanitarian crisis.

Syrian Arab Republic

On 8 January 2014, the Security Council met with the Special Coordinator of the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, Sigrid Kaag, to consider the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013). In her presentation, the Special Coordinator recalled the points made in the report transmitted by the Secretary-General on 27 December (S/2013/774), in particular the removal of nine containers of chemical materials "priority one" outside the Syrian Arab Republic. She mentioned that the removal had been done on 7 January 2014, for the first time since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). She also pointed out that the removal should have been done on 31 December 2013, but it was delayed until 7 January owing to the volatile security situation and logistical challenges.

All Council members commended the Special Coordinator for the progress made and paid tribute to the courage of the Joint Mission personnel, who were working in an extremely volatile security environment, and the excellent cooperation between the United Nations and OPCW since the start of the mission. Council members stressed the importance for the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to meet all the remaining deadlines for the removal and destruction of the remaining chemical materials. A suggestion was made to extend the mechanism of control of Syrian chemical weapons beyond 30 June 2014.

Yemen

On 28 January 2014, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Jamal Benomar, briefed the Council members on the latest developments of the political transition process in Yemen. In his presentation Mr. Benomar praised the adoption of the "final document" by the National Dialogue Conference. The Special Adviser criticized activities of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his supporters, intended to obstruct the ongoing political process. He also recalled

Security Council resolution 2051 (2012), paragraph 6, which highlighted the readiness of the Council to consider further measures available under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations to deter any actions in Yemen aimed at undermining the Government of National Unity and the political transition, through either violent or politically divisive means. The Special Adviser warned against the expanded ambitions of Al-Qaida and added that its ambitions extend beyond Yemen.

All Council members supported and welcomed the results of the National Dialogue Conference, and commended the Special Adviser and President Hadi for their efforts in this context. Council members rejected any attempts of obstruction aimed at undermining the Government of National Unity and the political transition. The Council members emphasized the critical need for the cessation of all actions meant to disrupt the political transition in Yemen and expressed readiness to consider further measures to deter those attempting to derail political progress.

Iraq

On 9 January, the Security Council held a meeting to discuss the situation in Iraq. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, Nickolay Mladenov, briefed the Council members on the situation specifically in Fallujah and Ramadi in Anbar Province. He stated that most parts in Fallujah were under the control of terrorist groups. He also expressed his concern about the increased numbers of internally displaced persons. As more than 8,000 families have been forced to flee their homes in Anbar, he urged the international community to provide humanitarian assistance. He acknowledged the efforts undertaken by the Government to address the security situation and stressed the importance of an inclusive political process that encourages dialogue among the different components of the Iraqi society. He also underlined the importance of holding free and fair elections in April 2014 and called on the Council to support Iraq's efforts in that regard.

Council Members affirmed their unconditional rejection of all acts of terrorism taking place in Iraq and expressed their concerns about the impact of the violence on civilians.

On 10 January 2014, the President of the Security Council adopted a presidential statement on the situation in Iraq.

Europe

Cyprus

On 22 January, the Security Council received a briefing from the Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), Lisa Buttenheim, and from the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus, Alexander Downer.

The Special Representative presented the latest report of the Secretary-General on UNFICYP (S/2013/781). She commended the work undertaken by the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus and the trust-building measures. She also underlined the challenges that UNFICYP faces inside the buffer zone and urged all parties to respect the mandate of UNFICYP.

The Special Adviser briefed the Council on the consultations between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots regarding the issuance of a joint communiqué, and he mentioned the obstacles that hindered its issuance. He added that his good-offices team looks forward to collaborating with both sides and called on Council members to engage in discussions to bridge the differences. Council members thanked the briefers and expressed support for their efforts. They also stressed the importance for both sides to reach a negotiating framework in accordance with the Security Council resolutions related to this matter.

On 30 January 2014, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2135 (2014) regarding the renewal of the mandate of UNFICYP.

United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

On 26 January, the Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, Miroslav Jenča, briefed the members of the Security Council in closed consultations on the developments in the region of Central Asia. He said that the overall situation in the region remained stable, despite persisting cross-border threats and a number of internal dynamics. He updated on the discussions, facilitated by the Centre, on a regional legal framework for transboundary water management based on mutually acceptable principles. He also addressed the efforts of the Centre in supporting the cooperation among the Central Asian States in the area of counter-terrorism and religious extremism.

The Council members reaffirmed the importance of preventive diplomacy and early-warning mechanisms for United Nations efforts to assist in the peaceful settlement of disputes, and acknowledged the role of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in assisting the countries of the region in responding to domestic and transnational threats to peace and in supporting sustainable development in Central Asia.

The Security Council adopted a press statement welcoming initiatives by the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia to assist the Central Asian States in finding a comprehensive solution to the management of transboundary water resources, taking into account the interests of all riparian States. The members of the Council encouraged the realization of the joint plan of action agreed upon for implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in the region. They also recognized the threat posed by illicit drug production, trade and trafficking to international peace and stability in the region. The members of the Council acknowledged the impact of the situation in Afghanistan on the Central Asian States and commended the role of the Centre, in cooperation with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, in facilitating the engagement of the Central Asian States to contribute to international efforts in the reconstruction and stabilization of Afghanistan.

Sanctions

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 23 January, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on the Democratic Republic of the Congo sanctions. The Permanent Representative of Jordan, Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al Hussein, briefed the Council as Chair of the

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Chair highlighted the main findings of the final report of the Group of Experts (S/2014/30) extended pursuant to resolution 2078 (2012), and briefly touched upon the Committee's deliberations on the report and its recommendations during the Committee meeting on 17 January.

The Chair pointed out that, in connection with the final report of the Group of Experts, which was made available to Committee members on 12 December, the most significant event documented by the Group during the reporting period was the military defeat of the M23 rebel movement.

The Chair also recalled paragraph 5 of resolution 2078 (2012), in which the Security Council requested the Group of Experts to submit a final report to the Council through the Committee. As there did not appear to be consensus in the Committee by which the Chair would transmit the report on behalf the Committee, in line with past practice, the Coordinator of the Group of Experts intended to transmit the report directly to the President of the Council and requested its issuance as a document of the Council, in pursuance of the remainder of paragraph 5, by which the Council further requested that, after a discussion with the Committee, the Group of Experts submit to the Council its final report.

Several Council members highlighted the important work conducted by the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A number of members welcomed the report of the Group of Experts, while others had reservations about certain recommendations in the report. In that context, several members expressed their concern about the inability to adopt the recommendations of the Group of Experts.

On 30 January, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2136 (2014), renewing the sanctions, assets freeze and travel ban against persons, entities and armed groups operating in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo until 1 February 2015. In the resolution the Council also requested the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the Group of Experts monitoring the implementation of those measures. The Group of Experts was requested to present a midterm report by 28 June 2014 and a final report before 16 January 2015.

Thematic issues and other matters

On 29 January, the Security Council held an open debate on the theme "War, its lessons and the search for a permanent peace". The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs participated in the meeting and addressed the main questions regarding the essential elements of reconciliation and how the United Nations approach to crisis management should be combined with the imperative of enabling societies to heal. He pointed out that peace agreements should provide agreed overall principles and mechanisms for the pursuit of reconciliation. He also stressed that the timing of elections and constitutional review processes must be carefully considered, since premature elections could allow opportunistic leaders to cultivate grievances in order to win office. He added that reconciliation must come from within, although States, the United Nations and regional organizations could facilitate national processes sooner rather than later. He also mentioned that a repository of comparative reconciliation experiences could be placed at the disposal of States, United Nations special envoys and others.

Council members reflected on the scourge of conflicts and lessons learned to seek ways to prevent them. It was recognized that a component of a conflict is conflicting narratives among the warring sides, and delegations sought out examples of meaningful reconciliation based on shared historical understanding, which helped to cement lasting peace. Many members supported the proposal of the presidency that the Security Council consider mandating a small United Nations historical advisory team that would help to gather and recover relevant documents and assist in the early work of setting up a functional national archive, or even a historical commission in post-conflict situations.

Counter-terrorism

On 27 January, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2133 (2014), which is the first resolution ever devoted specifically to kidnapping for ransom by terrorists. The resolution expressed the determination of the Council to secure the safe release of hostages without ransom payments or political concessions. The resolution called on States to continue expert discussions on kidnapping for ransom by terrorists within the United Nations and other organizations, including the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, and to work with the private sector to respond to terrorist kidnapping without paying ransoms.